

# Module 5

## Staying Employed



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# Board of Studies Syllabus Links

## Links to Work Education, Work Studies CEC and Work and the Community Life Skills course

| WORK EDUCATION<br>Stage 5   | WORK STUDIES CEC<br>Stage 6 | WORK AND<br>THE COMMUNITY<br>LIFE SKILLS<br>COURSE<br>Stage 6  |
|---|-----------------------------|--|
| Core 3 Introduction to the<br>Workplace<br><br>Elective 1 Workplace Induction |                             | Module 4 Introduction to<br>Workplace or<br>Community-<br>Based Learning<br>Environments<br><br>Module 5 Dealing with<br>Workplace and<br>Community-<br>Based Learning<br>Environment<br>Issues<br><br>Module 6 Participating in<br>Workplace<br>Learning and<br>Community-<br>Based Learning<br>Experiences |

## Links to Industry Curriculum Framework Courses

This module may be used to support the delivery of Stage 6 Industry Curriculum Framework courses. Teachers should use their professional judgement to determine the relevance of the materials to the units of competency being delivered. The materials should be placed in an industry-specific context.



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# Introduction

There is more to staying employed than just 'turning up'. This module describes some of the behaviours and skills that help employees keep their jobs.

There are many things to know and do in order to stay employed. Employees need to:

- be organised for work
- act in an appropriate manner
- deal with workplace pressures
- develop positive relations with co-workers.



## 5.1 Getting Organised for Work

### Time Management

To an employer, time is money. Employers value employees who manage their time carefully. It is important to:

- arrive at work on time
- return to work from breaks on time
- work as quickly and efficiently as you can.

#### General Rules for Time Management

1. Use watches and clocks.
2. Plan to arrive earlier than you need to. This will allow for unexpected hold-ups.

Employees who are constantly late to work, are late back from breaks or who waste time during work hours are costing their employer money in the form of lost productivity. If this happens often, the employer may end their employment.

### Steps to Arrive at Work on Time



#### 1. Use an Alarm Clock

Use an alarm clock to wake up at the right time. It is each individual's responsibility to get up at the right time, not their parent's or flatmate's responsibility. If having a late night, take extra steps to make sure you hear the alarm.

#### 2. Allow Enough Time

Allow time to shower, get dressed and have breakfast before leaving for work. If you need extra time to wash hair or iron clothes, get up a bit earlier.

#### 3. Consider Travel Arrangements

Get to know what time your bus or train leaves. Allow enough time to catch the train or bus, and allow waiting time if you have to make a connection.

If driving a car to work, leave enough time for things like traffic hold-ups. Allowing 15 minutes extra time than it usually takes should cover most traffic delays.

#### 4. Notify Your Employer if Arriving Late

Phone your employer if you are going to be late, and let them know. This shows that you understand the importance of being on time and do not take for granted that being late is acceptable.

## **Time Management at Work**

### **Work Breaks**

Organise to start work on time, and to come back from breaks (like morning tea and lunch) on time. If you need to go to the bank or shops during lunchtime, make sure this can be done in the time allowed. A half-hour lunchbreak makes it difficult to travel too far from work to complete personal business.

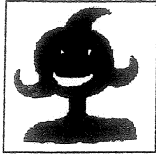
### **Personal Business**

If you need time off work to complete personal business, you should organise this in advance with your supervisor. Offer to catch up on the lost time on another day.

### **Special Leave**

There are valid reasons for having a day off work, for example if you are sick or you have suffered a loss in your family. However, employees must explain to their employer or supervisor why they need to take a day off work.






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 ACTIVITY
 

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## Getting Organised for Work

### A. Arriving on Time

Why is it important to arrive at work on time? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### B. Getting There

- 1) List all the things that you usually do in the morning. Beside each, write how long it would take to do.

|                    |                  |       |       |
|--------------------|------------------|-------|-------|
| <u>Brush teeth</u> | <u>4 minutes</u> | _____ | _____ |
| _____              | _____            | _____ | _____ |
| _____              | _____            | _____ | _____ |
| _____              | _____            | _____ | _____ |

- 2) Total up the amount of time it takes to complete your morning routine.

Total minutes: \_\_\_\_\_

- 3) Using the time it takes you to get ready in the morning, work out what time the following people need to get up and leave for work.

- a) Richard needs to be at work by 8 am. It takes approximately 15 minutes to get to work by bus. The bus stop is two minutes' walk from his house. Buses run every 10 minutes from 7 am.

- I. Write down the times the bus departs (leaves) from Richard's bus stop.

7.00 am \_\_\_\_\_

- II. Which of these would get Richard to work in good time? \_\_\_\_\_

- III. What time would this bus arrive at his workplace? \_\_\_\_\_

- IV. What time would Richard need to leave home by to catch this bus? \_\_\_\_\_

- b) Maria needs to be at work by 8:30 am. It takes 45 minutes by train to get to work. The train station is a five-minute walk away. Trains run every 15 minutes from 7 am.

I. Write down the the times the train departs (leaves) from Maria's train station.

7.00 am \_\_\_\_\_

II. Which of these times would get Maria to work in good time? \_\_\_\_\_

III. What time would this train arrive at the station near Maria's work? \_\_\_\_\_

## C. Taking Breaks

Circle the correct spelling.

Employers **value** / **valoo** people who arrive to work on **tim** / **time**.

They also believe that good workers return from their **breaks** / **brakes** on time and work **quickly** / **qickley**.

Employees should only take breaks for morning tea and **lungch** / **lunch**. They should not arrange to do their personal business such as **shopping** / **shoping** or **bancking** / **banking** during their lunchbreaks if they have only half an hour for lunch.

If employees need **special** / **speshial** time off for **siknes** / **sickness**, or because of death in the family, they must **explain** / **ecsplain** this to the employer beforehand.

## D. True or False?

Circle True or False for each statement.

- 1) There are some valid reasons for taking time off work. **True / False**
- 2) It is okay to take an extra 15 minutes at lunchtime if you have some important shopping to do. **True / False**
- 3) Alarm clocks are very useful for waking up at the right time. **True / False**
- 4) When driving to work, allow an extra hour each day in case of unexpected traffic hold-ups. **True / False**
- 5) When travelling to a new workplace, you need to know only where the bus or train leaves from. **True / False**
- 6) Always ring your employer if you are going to be unexpectedly late. **True / False**

## Using Time at Work Effectively

It is important to complete work to the standard that is expected. It is also important to complete it as quickly as possible. However, work should never be done so fast that it is below standard and needs to be redone.

### Steps to Make the Best Use of Time at Work

#### 1. Be Sure of What Has to Be Done First

It is better to ask a question to work out what has to be done than to spend time later trying to fix a mistake.

#### 2. Use Strategies to Remember Tasks

Find a way to remind yourself of the right way to do things. For example, have a list of things you need to do, or have a completed item as a model to follow.

#### 3. Use Strategies to Remember Instructions

If you need help to remember many instructions at one time, let your supervisor know. Supervisors would prefer to give instructions one at a time, or write them down, rather than fix a mistake because someone didn't quite remember the instructions. It takes less time to avoid a mistake than to fix one.

#### 4. Stay Focused on the Work

Stay focused on the task you are doing. When doing tasks which can become boring, think of ways to make them more interesting. For example, set goals to see how much you can do in a certain time.

#### 5. Improve the Ways You Work

Work out ways that will improve your work. This will also add interest to a job and make it more challenging. Supervisors are impressed with employees who use their initiative; this may be important when it comes time for assessing your work.

#### 6. Stay on Task

While it is important to get on well with co-workers and other staff, employees are paid to work, not to socialise. You can be polite and friendly without wasting time.



## ACTIVITY

# Getting Organised for Work

## A. Matching

Match the steps with their descriptions.

| Step                  | Description   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Remember instructions | It is better to ask what to do than to fix a mistake.   |
| Improve your work     | To remember the right way to do things, have a list of what to do, or have a completed item as a model.                     |
| Remember tasks        | To remember a lot of instructions at one time, ask the supervisor to give instructions one at a time or to write them down. |
| Know what to do first | To stay focused and not get bored, set goals to see what you can achieve in a certain time.                                 |
| Stay on task          | Use initiative to improve the way you work. This will make it more interesting — and the boss will be impressed.            |
| Stay focused          | It is important to get on well with co-workers but you can be polite and friendly without wasting time.                     |

## B. Effective Work

Write your answers to the following.

1) Why would an employer expect you to use your working time effectively?

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2) Give three reasons why it could be useful to an employee to use their work time effectively.

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_

- 3) What strategies have you used at work experience to help you work effectively?

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## C. Problem-solving

Write how you would solve these problems.

- 1) Julia could not remember how to use the photocopier; her boss became annoyed.

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- 2) Paul sometimes drilled the wrong-sized holes and inserted the wrong screws into the kitchen cabinets. He could not remember all the instructions the boss gave him.

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- 3) Jenny was bored folding the cardboard boxes and became very slow.

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- 4) Carolina made the same cakes every day, and it was becoming boring.

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- 5) Ramira spent more time gossiping in the toilets than working in the office.

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## Dressing Right

It is just as important to dress properly for work as it is for an interview. Dressing appropriately is an important part of keeping any job. Looking right is an important part in keeping a job, especially if there is contact with customers or members of the public.

### Steps to Looking Right for Work

#### 1. Know What to Wear

Do what you can to find out what you should wear to the workplace. Don't be embarrassed about ringing the employer. They will think you are using initiative. It is far better to ask than to turn up on the first day in the wrong clothes.

#### 2. Care for Uniforms or Required Clothing

If you need to wear a uniform, ask the employer where it can be bought. Sometimes the uniform is supplied at no cost as part of the job. Ask the employer how many uniforms will be needed. Consider how much time caring for uniforms will take. If you can wash your uniform each day (rather than use a laundromat once a week), you may need fewer uniforms.



#### 3. Select What Is Appropriate

If you don't need a uniform, you need to look at the clothes you own and decide what is appropriate. Some of the money from your first few pays may need to go towards buying some clothes for work. The clothes you wear to work don't have to be expensive, but they do have to be in good condition, clean and ironed.

#### 4. Buy New Clothes Thoughtfully

Before buying new clothes for work, think about the type of clothes you will need. If wearing good casual clothes to work is appropriate, buy a few basic pieces of clothing (such as black trousers or skirts, and a basic jacket, coat or jumper). Then you will simply need several different shirts, ties or tops. This way, you can mix and match to create many different outfits.



## ACTIVITY

# Getting Organised for Work

## A. Work Wear

1) Why is it important to dress appropriately for work?

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2) Employees who don't know what to wear to work should

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3) What questions should an employee ask the employer about uniforms?

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4) If you don't have a uniform to wear, what clothing do you need to wear or buy?

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5) What does 'mixing and matching' mean?

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- 6) Why do you think it is important to 'look right' in front of customers?

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- 7) Imagine you are starting work or work experience next week. You haven't got the right clothes to wear. What could you do?

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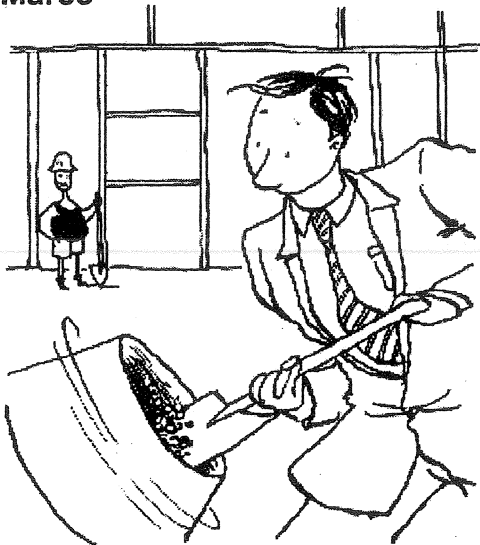
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## B. Looking More Closely

Look at these pictures, then answer the questions starting below.

A. Marco



B. Angela



- 1) Describe how Marco is dressed.

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- 2) What type of workplace do you think he is dressed for?

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- 3) What work is he doing?

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- 4) Is he dressed appropriately?

**Yes / No**

- 5) How should Marco be dressed for the type of work he is doing?

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- 1) Describe how Angela is dressed.

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- 2) What type of workplace do you think she is dressed for?

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- 3) What work is she doing?

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- 4) Is she dressed appropriately?

**Yes / No**

- 5) How should Angela be dressed for the type of work she is doing?

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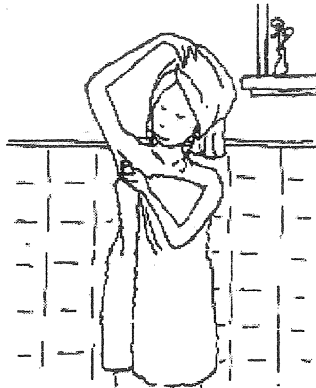
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## Personal Hygiene

Clothing is not the only factor in looking right for work. It is also important to be aware of personal hygiene, grooming and accessories.

### Things to Be Aware Of



#### Body Odour

It is very unpleasant for other workers if someone smells of body odour. It can even affect business profits in workplaces with customer contact such as in the hospitality industry. It is important to shower every day, use deodorant and wear clean clothes.

#### Foot Odour

Some people also have a problem with foot odour. This can be minimised by using products designed to stop the problem, washing feet more often or wearing shoes that allow air to circulate around the feet, where possible.

#### Handy Hint

Don't forget to put clean socks on, too!

#### Grooming

It is important to be well groomed every day. Washing hair regularly and combing it each day is the first step. It is also important to have good grooming in jobs where there is little contact with customers or where you may get dirty, like the building industry.

Be careful with make-up and accessories like big and colourful jewellery, unless it is an acceptable part of the industry that you work for. This applies to both men and women. Workers should stand out at work for their performance, not for their appearance.

Some jobs have occupational health and safety regulations for clothing, make-up and jewellery. For example, people using machinery may not be allowed to wear bracelets or rings, as these may get caught.



## ACTIVITY

# Getting Organised for Work

## A. Hygiene

1) Use the box to fill in the missing words.

|           |             |         |            |
|-----------|-------------|---------|------------|
| deodorant | hospitality | shower  | unpleasant |
| customer  | body odour  | profits | clean      |

It is very \_\_\_\_\_ for other workers if someone smells of \_\_\_\_\_. It can even affect business \_\_\_\_\_ in workplaces with \_\_\_\_\_ contact, such as in the \_\_\_\_\_ industry. It is important to \_\_\_\_\_ every day, use \_\_\_\_\_ and wear \_\_\_\_\_ clothes.

2) Fill in the missing letters.

Some people also have a problem with f \_ \_ t odour. Foot od \_ \_ r can be m \_ n \_ mised by using products des \_ gn \_ d to st \_ p the problem, w \_ sh \_ ng feet more often or wearing sh \_ \_ s that allow air to c \_ rc \_ l \_ te around the feet, where possible.

## B. Grooming

Use the box to fill in the missing words.

|              |      |             |         |         |
|--------------|------|-------------|---------|---------|
| occupational | hair | performance | combing | groomed |
|--------------|------|-------------|---------|---------|

It is important to be well \_\_\_\_\_ every day. Washing \_\_\_\_\_ regularly and \_\_\_\_\_ it each day is the first step.

Workers should stand out at work for their \_\_\_\_\_, not for their appearance.

Some jobs have \_\_\_\_\_ health and safety regulations for clothing, make-up and jewellery.

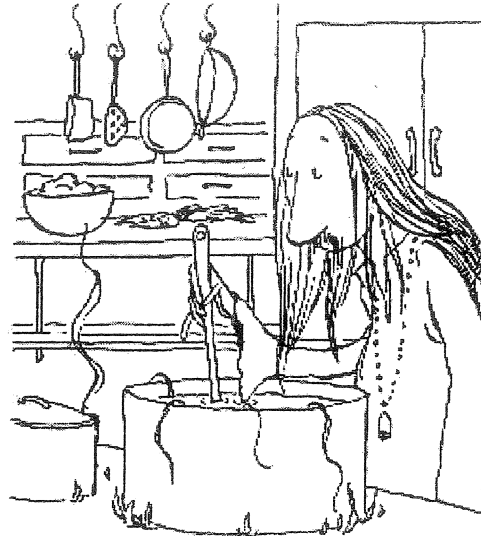
## C. Looking More Closely

Look at each picture carefully and discuss the hygiene issue in each one. Then answer the questions.

A.



B.



1) What problems could this cause in the workplace?

Picture a) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Picture b) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

2) How could this situation be changed?

Picture a) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

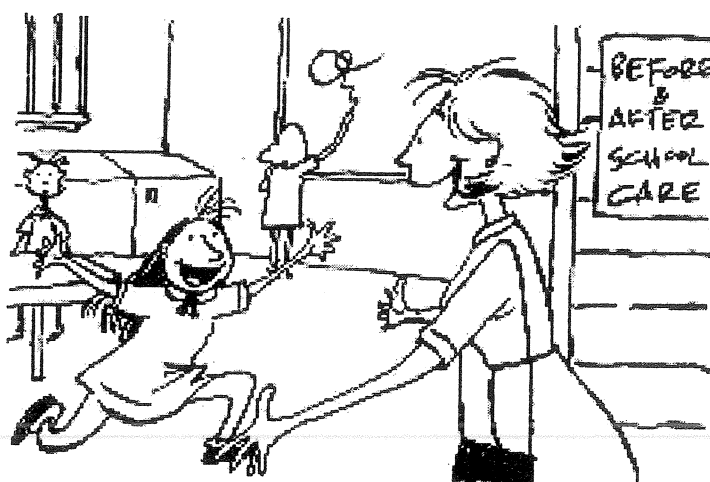
Picture b) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## Child Care

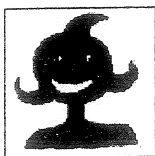
Having children — especially young children who haven't started school yet — and working outside the home can be difficult. Parents have a responsibility to make sure their children are well looked after and safe. They also have a responsibility to be at work at the times they have been rostered. Taking too much time off work to attend to family commitments can lead to dismissal (sacking).

### Strategies

1. Find a reliable carer for the children. Make sure the carer is aware of the hours they will look after the children.
2. When not using a child-care centre, have a back-up carer in case the babysitter is sick or can't mind the children for some reason.
3. For primary school-aged children, *arrange before- and after-school care* if needed. This may be an organised child-care service that operates within the child's school, or it may be a private arrangement with other parents.



4. To reduce the cost of child care, it may be possible to arrange with a friend to mind each other's children.
5. Try to arrange medical appointments outside of working hours. This is more difficult with specialists, but an explanation may help you arrange a more suitable appointment time.
6. If you must take time off work for family reasons, tell your employer why you need the time off. Some employment conditions have special leave entitlements for family care. Workers may be eligible for this type of leave.



## ACTIVITY

# Getting Organised for Work

## Child Care

1) Circle whether each statement is true or false.

- a) Workers are allowed to take as much time off as they need to care for their children. **True / False**
- b) The child carer should be aware of the hours they are to look after the children. **True / False**
- c) If a regular child carer is sick, it is best to leave children at home and organise another carer when at work. **True / False**
- d) For young school-aged children, parents should arrange before- and after-school care if they are going to be at work. **True / False**
- e) A good way to save money is to get someone else's children to mind your children. **True / False**

2) What strategies can parents use when arranging child care?

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_
- d) \_\_\_\_\_
- e) \_\_\_\_\_
- f) \_\_\_\_\_

## Having a Criminal Record

Having a criminal record may make it difficult to get a job. Most applications ask you to write down if you have a criminal record. If you do, employers may not ask you for an interview.

While this may seem unfair, it is up to each person to convince an employer that they can make a valuable contribution to the company. It is not always necessary to fill out a written application. You can approach the employer directly, or apply through an employment agency.

Whichever method you use, it is important to be honest if you have a criminal record. Lying, or choosing to 'leave out' information, about a criminal record may make the employer doubt that you can be trusted.

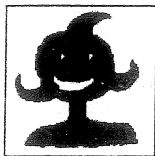
## How to Tell a Prospective Employer about a Criminal Record

An employer is likely to want to know what the crime was. It is important not to become defensive.

Tell the employer, in a calm and matter-of-fact way, about the criminal record. Tell the employer that you have learned from the mistake. It is not necessary to go into the small details of the crime.

Make sure the employer knows that you are looking for a fresh start and want to prove that you can be a good and trusted employee.





## ACTIVITY

# Getting Organised for Work

## A. Matching

Match the meanings to the words.

|             |                                    |
|-------------|------------------------------------|
| record      | Relied upon to do the right thing. |
| criminal    | Involving crime.                   |
| trusted     | Possible, or future.               |
| prospective | Facts from the past.               |

## B. Workplace Crime

Write your answers to these questions.

- 1) What would be the long-term consequences of breaking the law in the workplace?

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- 2) Why might a prospective employer be cautious if they saw that a job-seeker had committed a crime in a work setting?

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- 3) What would you say to your employer and co-workers if you committed a crime while currently employed?

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